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General Assembly
Sixty-first session

Official Records

91st plenary meeting
Thursday, 29 March 2007, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Ms. Al-Khalifa ..... (Bahrain)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Chidyausiku (Zimbabwe), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Tribute to the memory of His Excellency Mr. Andranik Margaryan, Prime Minister of Armenia

The Acting President: Before proceeding to the items on our agenda, it is my sad duty to pay tribute to the memory of the late Prime Minister of Armenia, His Excellency Mr. Andranik Margaryan, who passed away on Sunday, 25 March 2007.

On behalf of the General Assembly, I request the representative of Armenia to convey our condolences to the Government and the people of Armenia and to the bereaved family of His Excellency Mr. Andranik Margaryan.

I now invite representatives to stand and observe a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of His Excellency Mr. Andranik Margaryan.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silence.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Myanmar, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Asian States.

Mr. Swe (Myanmar): On behalf of the Asian Group, I wish to tender my deepest condolences to the Government and the people of Armenia on the demise of Prime Minister Andranik Margaryan, who passed away on 25 March.

Prime Minister Andranik Margaryan's untimely death is a great loss to his country, to the people of Armenia and to his family. He will always be remembered as an outstanding leader, statesman and patriot, whose unwavering dedication and commitment transformed his vision of a democratic and independent State of Armenia into reality. We honour his patriotism, his promotion of national values and preservation of Armenian identity, and his dedicated service in uplifting the social, political and economic life of his country.

Our heartfelt condolences go in particular to the bereaved family of the Prime Minister in their hour of grief.

We are confident that by keeping his dreams and legacy alive Armenia will go forward in its tasks of nation-building, strengthening its economy and reinforcing its role and place in the global community.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Georgia, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

Mr. Alasania (Georgia): On behalf of the Group of Eastern European States, I address this meeting of the General Assembly in order to convey our condolences and pay a tribute to the late Prime Minister of Armenia, Mr. Andranik Margaryan, who passed away on 25 March.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

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The members of the Group of Eastern European States extend their sincere sympathy to the people of Armenia on the loss of the head of their Government, Mr. Margaryan, who demonstrated distinguished leadership and greatly contributed to the economic development of his country during his seven years in office. He was among the founders of the Republican Party of Armenia, one of the biggest political parties in the country and which is currently in Government. His acts were recognized when he was awarded the Order of Sourb Mesrop Mashtots for his outstanding contribution with respect to statehood-building and economic development. Mr. Margaryan had served Armenia with dignity as a true patriot.

On a personal note, allow me to say that I had the privilege of knowing the late Prime Minister and would like to add that his passing is a great loss not only for his family and friends, but for the people of Armenia as well.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Haiti, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States.

Mr. Mérorès (Haiti) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, which I am honoured to chair this month, I should like to pay well-deserved tribute to a man who, through his ability and proven political career, distinguished himself through long years in his country, Armenia. I refer to Prime Minister Andranik Margaryan, who passed away on 25 March 2007 and whose memory we are saluting today.

Armenia will long remember this man whose political commitment made a great contribution to the advent of an Armenia more open to dialogue with European countries and with its neighbours. He was a member of parliament in the 1990s and held various posts in the administration in Soviet times. He was involved in politics beginning in 1965 and defended the cause of Armenia and expressed his democratic vision of an independent people and State. Prime Minister Margaryan, the head of the Republican Party, distinguished himself, side by side with the Armenian President, in May 2000, through his adoption of moderate positions for his country, the Government of which he headed during two successive terms. He headed the Government which was in power for the longest time since the accession of Armenia to independence. In his eulogy, the head of the Armenian State, Mr. Robert Kocharian, stated, "We have lost a statesman, a colleague, a friend, who headed the Government for nearly seven years. And those seven years were the best years of our State".

Those words eloquently reflect the feelings not only of the President of Armenia but also of the entire bereaved population on the occasion of this sudden loss.

Once again, I should like to express, on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, our sincere condolences to the people and the Government of Armenia and to the bereaved family which has been so sorely tested by this loss.

The Acting President: I give the floor to the representative of New Zealand, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States.

Ms. Banks (New Zealand): On behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States, I would like to express our sincere condolences to the people and the Government of the Republic of Armenia on the passing of Prime Minister Andranik Margaryan.

During a term of office spanning almost seven years, Prime Minister Margaryan was regarded as a powerful force for peace and stability in the Republic. His efforts to build bridges across the political divide were widely applauded. Prime Minister Margaryan will be fondly remembered for his lifelong efforts to build an independent and prosperous nation.

On this sad occasion, our thoughts and sympathy are with the family and friends of Prime Minister Margaryan and the people and the Government of the Republic of Armenia.

The Acting President: I call on the representative of the United States, who will speak on behalf of the host country.

Mr. Miller: On behalf of the Government and the people of the United States, I would like to convey our most sincere condolences to the family and friends of Prime Minister Andranik Margaryan and to the people and the Government of Armenia.

Prime Minister Margaryan was an Armenian patriot, a fighter for freedom and democracy. Like others who have taken up the struggle against totalitarianism and repression, he suffered and was

imprisoned. But he lived to see his country free and independent and to lead it towards a promising future.

We mourn his untimely death but celebrate today his lifelong contributions to Armenian life.

The Acting President: I call on the representative of Armenia.

Mr. Martirosyan (Armenia): Today the Armenian people are mourning the untimely passing of the Prime Minister of Armenia, Mr. Andranik Margaryan. As a capable statesman, he never shied away from responsibility and performed his duties with devotion and professionalism. He had Armenia's best interests at heart in whatever he was called upon to do.

As a citizen, he always listened to his conscience. His life was one of dedication and service to his country and people as well as to the causes of peace, righteousness and justice. He was one of the founders of the Republican party and had been its Chairman since 1997, having headed, since May 2000, the first coalition Government in Armenia.

Owing to his efforts, the consensus policy has become a part of Armenian politics. He enjoyed the confidence of the Armenian polity and became the longest-serving Prime Minister of our country. Diligent and considerate, able to feel acutely the pulse of his country and accordingly respond to the demands of a globalizing world, he made a great contribution to Armenia's remarkable economic growth and social progress. His outstanding performance will remain forever in the minds of our people and in the annals of the history of our State.

On behalf of the people of Armenia and of its Government, let me express my gratitude for the tributes made here to the memory of Armenia's late Prime Minister, Andranik Margaryan. May he rest in peace, and God bless you all.

The Acting President: I give the floor to the representative of South Africa, who will speak on behalf of the African Group.

Mr. Sangqu (South Africa): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the African Group.

The African Group was shocked to learn of the untimely passing of the Prime Minister of Armenia, Mr. Andranik Margaryan. Mr. Margaryan had been Prime Minister of Armenia since 2000. He deeply impressed those of us from Africa, who, because of our struggle for independence, revere and respect those who have engaged in similar struggles.

Mr. Margaryan waged a principled struggle for the independence of his own beloved country, Armenia, a cause for which he suffered imprisonment for two years. He further distinguished himself by also becoming Armenia's longest-serving Prime Minister, which attests to his strong character and his ability to serve as a uniting force in both his own political party — the Republican party — and the nation of Armenia.

Our thoughts are with the people and the Government of Armenia, which have lost a talented and conscientious leader in Andranik Margaryan.

The African Group expresses its deepest condolences to the Government and the people of Armenia and wishes them strength in these trying times.

Reports of the Sixth Committee

The Acting President: The General Assembly will now consider the reports of the Sixth Committee on agenda items 128, 153 and 110. I request the Rapporteur of the Sixth Committee to introduce in one intervention the reports of the Sixth Committee.

Mr. Loum (Senegal), Rapporteur of the Sixth Committee (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to introduce to the General Assembly the reports of the Sixth Committee on the three agenda items considered by the Assembly during its resumed sixty-first session, from 12 to 23 March 2007 — that is, items 110, 128 and 153. I will start with agenda item 128, then move to agenda item 153 and, finally, to agenda item 110.

I should like to draw the Assembly's attention first to item 128, entitled "Administration of justice at the United Nations". The relevant report is contained in document A/61/460/Add.1, and the draft decision that the Sixth Committee recommends to the General Assembly for adoption appears in paragraph 8 of the report.

According to the draft decision, the General Assembly would continue at its sixty-second session, in the Sixth Committee, under this agenda item, its consideration of the legal aspects, both institutional and procedural, of the report of the Redesign Panel on the United Nations system of administration of justice and the comments of the Secretary-General on the

recommendations contained in the report of the Panel, taking into account the outcome of the deliberations of the Fifth Committee at the resumed sixty-first session of the General Assembly, and the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

It requests the Secretary-General, in accordance with any further decisions that may be taken by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Fifth Committee on this item during the sixty-first session, to provide more details on a proposal to strengthen the functions of the Office of the Ombudsman, including mediation, and draft elements of a statute of the first instance and the appellate instance, taking into account the points set out in appendix I to the letter from the Vice-Chairman of the Sixth Committee addressed to the President of the General Assembly.

The Sixth Committee adopted this draft decision without a vote. I hope that the General Assembly will be in a position to do the same.

I should now like to draw the attention of the General Assembly to item 153 of the agenda, entitled "Requests for observer status in the General Assembly". The relevant report of the Sixth Committee is contained in document A/61/462/Add.1, and the draft resolution whose adoption is recommended to the General Assembly appears in paragraph 6.

By terms of the draft resolution, entitled "Observer status for the Islamic Development Bank Group in the General Assembly", the Assembly would decide to invite the Islamic Development Bank Group to participate in its sessions and its work in the capacity of observer. The Assembly would also request the Secretary-General to take the necessary action to implement the resolution. The Sixth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. I hope that the Assembly will do likewise.

Finally, I draw the attention of the Assembly to agenda item 110, entitled "Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly". The relevant report of the Sixth Committee is contained in document A/61/458/Add.1, and the revised provisional programme of work of the Committee for the sixty-second session of the General Assembly is included in paragraph 5 of the report. The Sixth Committee recommends to the Assembly the revised provisional programme of work, as proposed by the Bureau and set out in the report. The Committee adopted its revised provisional programme of work for the forthcoming session without a vote. I hope that the General Assembly will do likewise.

That concludes my presentation. I should like to commend the spirit of compromise that characterized our work and to thank all delegations for their contributions. I wish to pay a well-deserved tribute to Mr. Ganeson Sivagurunathan of Malaysia for the skill and professionalism with which he guided our work and which enabled us to achieve these results. Likewise, I commend the other Vice-Chairmen, Mr. Stefan Barriga of Liechtenstein and Mr. Theodor Cosmin Onisii of Romania, for their invaluable contributions. And I cannot conclude without thanking the secretariat of the Sixth Committee, whose kind attention never failed us.

The Acting President: If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the Sixth Committee which are before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The Acting President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of position.

The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Sixth Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records. May I remind members that under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting, unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

May I remind delegations that explanations of position are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Sixth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Sixth Committee unless the Secretariat is notified otherwise in advance. I therefore

hope that we may proceed to adopt without a vote those recommendations that were adopted without a vote in the Sixth Committee.

Agenda item 128 (*continued*)

Administration of justice at the United Nations

Report of the Sixth Committee (A/61/460/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft decision recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 8 of its report.

Mr. Sandoval (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would just like to refer to an editorial point, but it is one that affects the very tone of the draft decision. According to the record that my delegation has of Friday's deliberations in the Sixth Committee, the English version of the decision, in its antepenultimate line, should read "statute(s) of the first instance and the appellate instance", rather than "statute or statutes of the first instance and the appellate instance". That is in accordance with my delegation's record of the deliberations and the final decision of the Sixth Committee.

In addition, the Spanish version includes some words that do not correspond to what was agreed or to the English version. The Spanish version reads "y un proyecto de elementos de un estatuto o estatutos de los órganos de primera instancia y de apelación". The word "bodies" does not appear in the English version. Therefore, my delegation requests that the Spanish version be amended to read "estatuto(s) de la primera instancia y de la instancia de apelación" so that it conforms to the English and French versions — keeping in mind that at the moment my delegation does not have the text in the other official languages. But, according to the record of the discussions that my delegation has, we wish to request that the amendments be made.

Mrs. Torrealba Saldivia (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): In order to preserve the integrity of the Spanish version, our delegation supports the request made by the delegation of Colombia in the wording proposed.

The Acting President: The Secretariat will take note of those observations, and changes will be reflected in the final text.

We will now a take a decision on the draft decision. The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 128.

Agenda item 153 (*continued*)

Requests for observer status in the General Assembly

Report of the Sixth Committee (A/61/462/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

I now call on the representative of Israel, who wishes to speak in explanation of position before action is taken on the draft resolution. May I remind delegations that explanations of position are limited 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Carmon (Israel): I thank the presidency for allowing me to present our position on this issue.

Owing to concerns regarding relationships between the Islamic Development Bank Group and Hamas, a terrorist organization, Israel will not be able to join the consensus on this draft resolution. The organizational chart for the Islamic Development Bank Group shows that the Bank operates the Al-Aqsa Fund and the Al-Quds Fund — two monetary funds with known ties to Palestinian terror. In addition, we have indications of the Bank's linkage to Hamas — its leadership, its monitoring apparatus and its so-called charity funds.

Israel believes that draft resolutions on General Assembly observer status should be adopted by the full consensus of the membership. However, we cannot welcome the Islamic Development Bank Group at this time. Therefore, Israel must disassociate itself from the consensus.

The Acting President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position.

We will now take action on the draft resolution entitled "Observer status for the Islamic Development Bank Group in the General Assembly". The Sixth

Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 61/259).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 153?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 110 (*continued*)

Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

Report of the Sixth Committee (A/61/458/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft decision recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 5 of its report. We will now take action on the draft decision, entitled "Revised provisional programme of work of the Sixth Committee for the sixty-second session of the General Assembly". The Sixth Committee adopted the draft decision without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft decision was adopted.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 110.

The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of all the reports of the Sixth Committee.

The meeting rose at 10.45 a.m.